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NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

27 September 1979

*This fine
memo by
[redacted] will be
of interest to
you and your
colleagues*

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, National Foreign Assessment
Center

FROM:

[redacted]
EA/D/NFAC

SUBJECT: A Useful Structure for Some NIEs

1. In 1969, as a Latin America Analyst in ONE, I was asked to produce an NIE on the prospects for Peru under the new military government. The administration was new, and their understanding of things Latin was weak at best. They were faced with a decision about what kind of relationship to pursue with a government that appeared to them to be anti-democratic and leftist. My job was to address their key worries, to educate, and to estimate. I adopted a question and answer format to do the job.

2. The virtue of this approach was that it organized information in "packets of thought" that were similar to the policymakers' way of thinking about Peru. We delivered both information and estimates in small bits. We gave the appearance of dialogue. We urged the reader from section to section by continuing to ask yet another question. We were able to integrate some political, economic, and social data in each mini-essay (though not as much integration was achieved as we would like to see today). We were not constrained by the estimate form that seemed to require separate sections for each of these categories of information.

3. It was very easy to draw conclusions from information presented in this way. Notice that no separate section of key judgments was used. There was a section "Conclusions" that summarized the main judgments and tone of the paper, but the intent in this case was to construct

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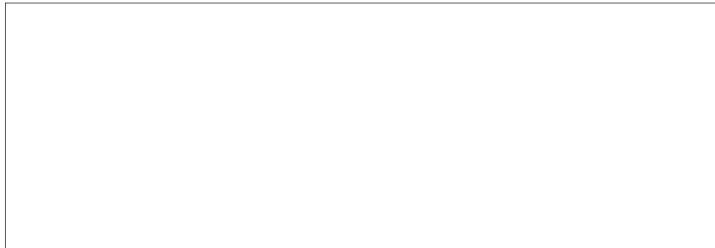
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a paper that was too interesting to put down. We know that the NIE was sent to the President by Henry Kessinger.

4. The annex material in this paper was offered as a perspective to shore up the discussion of Peruvian problems that were alluded to in the main text. The straight factual style contributed to a feeling for the complexities and potential intractability of the problems that faced the military government.

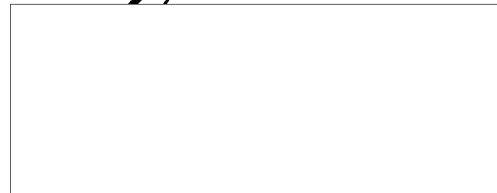
5. In looking over the current list of Community work in process, it seems to me that some of the following papers might be or might have been helped by this approach:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.



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It is not necessary to have the precise questions of the policymakers in mind when undertaking such paper, although clearly that would be an advantage. One need only ask questions that are germane, and answer each one with care, in order to carry off this idea. I think this format substantially enhances the process of communication, and I commend it to you as a viable option for some future NIEs.



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Attachment:

NIE 97-1-69

dtd 18 December 1969

**Registry Copy,
To BE RETURNED**

*returned 17 Oct
copy made*

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